

What is claimed is:

1. A video imaging system, comprising:
 - a camera head for transmitting image data;
 - a camera control unit for receiving and processing said image data from said camera head;
 - a storage device accessible by said camera control unit; and
 - information stored on said storage device;
 - said information used by said camera control unit for selecting hardware in said camera control unit to process the image data.
2. The video imaging system according to claim 1, further comprising a camera head identifier received by said camera control unit for retrieving said information from said storage device.
3. The video imaging system according to claim 2, wherein said camera head transmits said camera head identifier.
4. The video imaging system according to claim 1, wherein said camera head includes said storage device.
5. The video imaging system according to claim 1, wherein said camera control unit further comprises at least one replaceable hardware component.
6. The video system according to claim 5, wherein said information specifies said at least one replaceable hardware component.
7. The video system according to claim 5, wherein said at least one replaceable hardware component further includes a processor.
8. The video system according to claim 5, wherein said at least one replaceable hardware component further includes a memory device.

9. The video system according to claim 5, wherein said at least one replaceable hardware component further includes a field programmable gate array.

10. The video system according to claim 5, further comprising a video bus and said at least one replaceable hardware component attaches to said video bus.

5

11. The video imaging system according to claim 5, wherein said replaceable hardware component includes a connector.

12. The video imaging system according to claim 11, wherein said connector receives the image data.

13. The video imaging system according to claim 11, wherein said connector outputs a signal processed from the image data.

14. The video imaging system according to claim 1, wherein said camera control unit further comprises hardware capable of processing at least two different types of image data.

15. The video imaging system according to claim 1, wherein said information routes the image data received by said camera control unit to the hardware capable of processing a specified type of image data.

16. The video imaging system according to claim 1, wherein said information enables said camera control unit to issue commands to said camera head.

17. A video imaging system, comprising:
a camera head for transmitting image data; and
a camera control unit for receiving and processing the image data from said camera head;

said camera control unit includes at least one replaceable hardware component.

18. The video imaging system according to claim 17, further comprising a storage device accessible by said camera control unit.

19. The video imaging system according to claim 18, further comprising information stored on said storage device.

20. The video imaging system according to claim 17, further comprising a connector for outputting a signal processed from the image data.

21. The video imaging system according to claim 17, wherein said at least one replaceable hardware component processes at least two different types of image data.

22. A video imaging system, comprising:
a camera head for transmitting image data;
a camera control unit for receiving and processing the image data from said camera head;
said camera control unit includes at least one replaceable hardware component; and
software executing on said camera control unit for selecting hardware in said camera control unit to process the image data.

23. The video imaging system according to claim 22, further comprising a storage device accessible by said camera control unit.

24. The video imaging system according to claim 23, wherein said software for selecting hardware is stored on said storage device.

25. A method for video imaging, comprising the steps of:
providing a camera for transmitting image data;
providing a camera control unit for processing the transmitted image data;
coupling a storage device to the camera control unit;
storing information on the storage device;
retrieving the information from the storage device;
executing the information on the camera control unit; and
selecting hardware in the camera control unit to process the image data.
26. The method according to claim 25, further comprising the step of coupling at least one replaceable hardware component to the camera control unit.
27. The method according to claim 26, further comprising the step of configuring the at least one replaceable hardware component.
28. The method according to claim 25, further comprising the step of processing at least two different types of image data.